

# 185-187 Camp Street

## The Billy Taylor House

From the organization's website, "The Billy Taylor House is a grassroots non-profit organization founded by residents of Providence RI's East Side, who desire to promote youth engagement for the well-being of the community as a whole. The organization has its origins in the mentorship of the late William "Billy" Taylor, after whom the park on Camp Street is named for his exemplary work in the 1980s with youth from the Mt. Hope Neighborhood. Noticing the need for youth engagement in the neighborhood, ages 14-21, this group has come together in order to acquire the abandoned property that Billy used to live in, 185 Camp Street, and turn it into programming that supports youth in the pursuit of their dreams..."

Our mission is to ignite the ambition of Providence's most disconnected young people. We accomplish it by providing regular enrichment activities and a workforce development program that afford youth the opportunity to trade crime, violence, and poverty for social cohesion and economic vitality."

The Billy Taylor House supports positive youth and civic engagement, community service, self-awareness, and self-care. Organizations such as these are essential to the success of youth and, in turn, of the community. Youth now have a place to go afterschool or during the weekend, instead of getting into crowds with negative influences. The founder, Billy Taylor, was born in Providence in May 1956. He died at the age of 29, yet his legacy – the multiple programs he created for youth in his Mt. Hope community, his teachings, etc., will forever continue as long as the Billy Taylor House stands.



[www.billytaylorhouse.org/about](http://www.billytaylorhouse.org/about)

[http://providencemedia.static2.adqcic.com/uploads/inline/1396644019\\_4133.jpg](http://providencemedia.static2.adqcic.com/uploads/inline/1396644019_4133.jpg)

# 124 Camp Street

## The Billy Taylor Park

The park on Camp Street in Providence, RI, was named in honor of the late Billy Taylor – a man whose dedication to his community continues to positively impact the lives of people today.

From providencejournal.com, “Mount Hope is a mainly residential neighborhood in northeast Providence, north of College Hill, the historic center of the city. It is bordered by Rochambeau Avenue to the north, Hope Street to the east, Olney Street on the southern edge, and Route 95 and the Amtrak line to the west. Mount Hope was only sparsely developed until the 1850s, when real-estate speculators began to build more housing there to accommodate the city’s growing population of factory workers.

Mount Hope is also a historically African-American community...“More settlers came to the [Mount Hope] neighborhood in the first part of the 19th century, locating primarily in the southern area of Mount Hope on Olney Street, Bacon Street (no longer in existence), Jenkins Street, Pleasant Street, Abbott Street, and North Main Street. African-Americans, deeply ingrained in the history of the neighborhood, were the predominant residents of this new settlement,” the Providence Journal said.

The Church of the Holy Name of Jesus is a beautiful example of the rich diversity in the Mt. Hope neighborhood that borders College Hill.

The Lippitt Hill Redevelopment Project spanned between the 1950s and 1970s in Providence. City planners were desperate to create a shopping plaza in this neighborhood. Hundreds of Blacks had to move out of Mt. Hope and seek housing elsewhere. Many went to the West End and Southside of Providence. Many historic homes in the southern portion of Mount Hope near Olney Street were lost during this time. The project “resulted in the demolition of a large portion of dilapidated low-income housing in the southern portion of Mount Hope” and it “displaced large numbers of residents, particularly African-Americans, to other parts of Mount Hope and Providence.”, according to the Providence Journal.



<http://www.providencejournal.com/homes/neighborhood-of-the-week/20140202-an-urban-melting-pot-in-mount-hope.ecc>

[http://council.providenceri.com/sites/default/files/imagecache/gallery\\_assist-gallery\\_assist-preview-550/gallery\\_assist/4/gallery\\_assist890/Billy%20Taylor%20park%20playground.jpg](http://council.providenceri.com/sites/default/files/imagecache/gallery_assist-gallery_assist-preview-550/gallery_assist/4/gallery_assist890/Billy%20Taylor%20park%20playground.jpg)

# Trinity Square

## The Trinity United Methodist Church/Southside Cultural Center

The Trinity United Methodist Church is located across the street from Trinity Square in Providence, RI, at the junction of Elmwood Avenue and Broad Street. In 1964, Rhode Island citizens wanted a local and professional theatre in the area and Trinity Square Repertory Theatre was born. The first physical space for the Theatre Company was the auditorium in the Trinity United Methodist Church. At Trinity, the theatre productions represented some of major names in Black theatre, with Black actors and actresses starring in roles. By 1973, Trinity grew large enough to move to its current downtown location in what was known as the Majestic Theatre. Trinity Rep (as it is known now) is a Tony award-winning theatre company and considered one of the best regional theatre companies in the country. It has given over 58 world premieres in its 50-year history, offers a MFA program in conjunction with Brown University, and has pioneered educational outreach programs for southeastern New England.



Trinity Rep downtown



The church on Trinity Square

# 60 Union Street

## Fay's Theatre

Built in 1912 and formerly known as Union Theatre, renowned vaudeville performer Edward M. Fay founded Fay's Theatre in 1916. It was a racially segregated vaudeville house during its time. The height of its operation was during the decades between the First and Second World Wars. Many big names in music at the time passed through Fay's Theatre, and even some prominent African-American musicians entertained an audience, such as Mr. Don Redman. Don Redman is credited as the one of the founders of big band and swing. He was an arranger, composer, and musicians who collaborated with some of the biggest names in Jazz from the 20s up until his death. In 1950, the theatre closed because of declining numbers in ticket sales. Vaudeville was nearly obsolete at this time. Fay temporarily closed down the theatre, and soon city officials razed the building to build a parking lot, and that purpose remains today. The space is now the Biltmore Hotel garage.



<http://photos.cinematreasures.org/production/photos/2123/1307133416/large.jpg?1307133416>  
<http://www.rihs.org/mssinv/Mss409.htm>

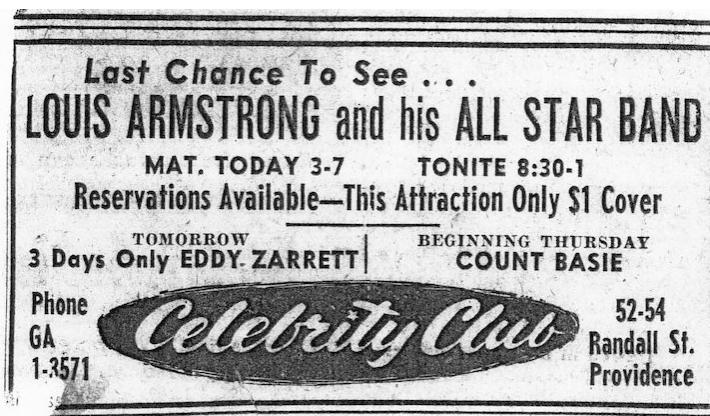
# Randall & Charles Streets

## The Celebrity Club

From the Rhode Island Small Business Journal, “In the 1950s the Celebrity Club was Providence’s premier jazz nightclub, drawing top names including Billie Holiday, Duke Ellington, Sarah Vaughn, Etta James, and Louis Armstrong, some engagements lasting as long as a week... ‘I can remember Ray Charles performing there,’ noted Steve Kass in an interview regarding a documentary film about the club... In addition to the big names, many local jazz and R&B artists got their start at the Celebrity Club. Located in Randall Square, the club quickly gained a reputation as a world-class venue. It played a crucial role in shaping the city’s musical and social culture.”

Founded by Paul Filippi 1949, the Celebrity Club was not just the first integrated club in Providence, but also one of the first integrated clubs in New England. The influence of the Celebrity Club in Providence today is undeniable, despite its short career and premature closing in the early 1960s. Nevertheless, the Providence arts scene subsequently flourished; many original, and young Black musicians made their way to Providence as a mecca for performance and artistic opportunities.

During its time in Providence, the Celebrity Club was still met with racism that was normal for its time. Police sometimes would terminate an ongoing concert and ask all of the White people to leave the Club. They believed that each ‘color’ needs its own space. If a bunch of African Americans desired the Celebrity Club then it will just be their own. Most obliged these orders just to return to the club later that night. The Celebrity Club provided quality local and national entertainment and music to this small New England city. A plaque proudly stands a few feet away from where the building used to stand. The structure was demolished after closing.



<http://www.rirocks.net/images/1954%20Celebrity%20Club.jpg>  
<http://mappingartsproject.org/providence/locations/celebrity-club/>  
[http://www.rihs.org/assets/files/publications/2005\\_Sum.pdf](http://www.rihs.org/assets/files/publications/2005_Sum.pdf)

# North Main & Olney Streets

## Hard Scrabble & Snow Town Race Riots

Hard Scrabble and Snow Town were two predominantly African-American neighborhoods in Providence during the 19<sup>th</sup> century. These neighborhoods existed in the area surrounding where the University Apartments complex and Plaza now stand in the Mt. Hope neighborhood. These neighborhoods were away from the city center and provided cheap housing for working class free Blacks and their families. Other cities in the north, like Boston, Massachusetts, Bridgeport, Connecticut, and Staten Island, New York, had similar historically African-American communities composed of working class people looking to rise the social ladder.

In Providence, tensions still developed between Hard Scrabble and other neighborhoods because of prejudices. In 1824, a white mob attacked multiple Black homes in Hard Scrabble after a Black man refused to get off a sidewalk after being approached by a group of White men. The mob claimed that they were only trying to get rid of places in Hard Scrabble with bad reputations, but over 20 Black homes were destroyed. Four members of the mob were tried, but only one was found guilty. The police was barely mattered.

Snow Town was another interracial, predominately African-American neighborhood in Providence during the 19<sup>th</sup> century. It too experienced the wrath of an agitated White mob seeking revenge for the shooting death of a sailor. This Snow Town mob also destroyed multiple Black homes in the area. The Snow Town riots received more media attention, and voters in Providence approved a measure for a stronger police force. These riots are examples of the fact that although the North was relatively progressive, the horrors of racism affected these communities.

There is some controversy as to where these neighborhoods existed. Some scholars say that the neighborhoods were located where the State House back lawn is located, on the river. Some scholars say that the neighborhoods were located where the base of Olney Street is today.

*[Bus stop installation in front of shopping center with Whole Foods]*



# 75 Chester Avenue

## The Pond Street Baptist Church

Organized in 1835, the Pond Street Baptist is located on the West End of Providence. It was formally known as The Second Free Will Baptist Church. Jeremiah Malachi Joyner, the father of the famous soprano Sissieretta Jones and a former slave along with his wife Henrietta, accepted a post to become the pastor of this church in 1876. The Church was known to be a part of the Underground Railroad and participated in antislavery movement. By the late 1880s, Providence had a moderately active and large African American community, and the city's atmosphere was relatively progressive in terms of racial matters (although marginalized communities in Providence still experienced racial prejudice).



# 40 Westminster Street

## E.M. Bannister Art Studio

On the second floor of the building adjacent to the Textron skyscraper downtown was the studio of the eminent African-American painter Edward Mitchell Bannister. It was here that he created his famous works of art.



# 340 Lockwood Street

## D.A.R.E.

Who is or what is D.A.R.E. ? **D**irect **A**ction for **R**ights and **E**quality

From [daretowing.org](http://daretowing.org),

“1. We believe that poor and working class families, people of color, oppressed nationalities including immigrants regardless of documentation status, women, LGBTQ community members and youth must be at the forefront in leading the way to our liberation.

2. We believe that there are related systems of oppression and exploitation that are responsible for the conditions our communities face here and around the world, and that our work must challenge these forms of oppression. Specifically, we fight against:

- Racism and white supremacy (oppression based on race and nationality)
- Sexism, patriarchy, and heterosexism (oppression based on gender and sexual orientation)
- Capitalism (oppression of the poor and working class by the rich and ruling class)
- Imperialism (oppression of entire nations and peoples by other nations and peoples).

3. We believe that these systems of oppression aim to maintain power by continuing to divide and conquer our communities; however our solidarity and strength is at its best when we understand and appreciate our various cultures, backgrounds, and histories.

4. We believe that our local struggles are connected to a larger movement of national and global struggles of oppressed people and that together, we need to move toward our goals of social, economic, and political justice.

5. We believe in creating long-term solutions that address the root causes of problems and in building real security in our communities and beyond, by addressing the origins of conflict and violence and by fostering greater commitment and accountability to one another.”

# 236 Prairie Avenue

## Soul Patrol

You stopped at the Urban League of Rhode Island. This isn't a location on *The Resisters*, but Prairie Avenue is. The Soul Patrol was a group of volunteer Black 'policemen' who patrolled the streets around Prairie Avenue, probably because Providence cops weren't ever available for this side of the city. The Soul Patrol maintained and protected this neighborhood to quell riots after the death of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., according to Isadore Ramos from *Underground Rhode Island*. Almost like the Minutemen for the Continental Army, the Soul Patrol was willing to tend to the needs and safety of the community.



# 60 Portland Street

## Afro Art Center, Inc.

The Afro Arts Center, Inc. was the Black communities project dedicated to Black Arts. It was founded in Providence in August of 1967. The location was chosen because it was in the heart of the community. The Afro Arts Center provided much needed space for Black artists in the community, as well as formal training in the Fine Arts for young Black artists. The Center offered a variety of instruction from drawing to Modern Dance. The Center provided the materials to create works of art, the space, and the spirit to encourage young Black artists in the area. The instructors were local community members. These men and women created beautiful works of art but never received proper recognition because of the limited opportunities for Black artists during the time. The Center also sponsored Black Arts Festivals for public showcases of Black Arts and artists.

